



[Email this Document](#)

**Press Release**  
**For Immediate Release**  
**May 19, 2006**

**U.S. Department of Justice**  
**Eastern District of Pennsylvania**  
**United States Attorney**  
**615 Chestnut Street Suite 1250**  
**Philadelphia, PA 19106-4476**  
**(215) 861-8200**

## **Three Defendants Sentenced in Federal Internet Music Piracy Crackdown:**

### ***One Defendant Receives 15 Months in Prison***

WASHINGTON, D.C.—The first members of pre-release music piracy groups from Operation FastLink were sentenced today, Assistant Attorney General Alice S. Fisher of the Justice Department's Criminal Division and U.S. Attorney Chuck Rosenberg of the Eastern District of Virginia announced. Derek A. Borchardt, age 22, of Charlotte, NC, Aaron O. Jones, age 30, of Hillsboro, Ore., and George S. Hayes, age 31, of Danville, Va. were sentenced for their involvement with Internet music piracy groups.

Borchardt and Jones each pleaded guilty to a single felony count of conspiracy to commit copyright infringement for their involvement in the pre-release music group "Apocalypse Crew" or "APC." Jones was sentenced to six months in prison/six months home confinement and Borchardt was sentenced to six months home confinement by United States District Court Judge Claude M. Hilton. Matthew B. Howard, age 24, of Longmont, Colo., another member of the APC conspiracy, will be sentenced by Judge Hilton on May 26, 2006.

Hayes who previously pleaded guilty to one count of criminal copyright infringement related to his involvement in another pre-release music group called "Chromance" or "CHR" was sentenced to 15 months in prison by United States District Court Judge Leonie M. Brinkema.

These are the first federal criminal sentences for members of pre-release music groups from Operation FastLink, an ongoing federal crackdown against the organized piracy groups responsible for most of the initial illegal distribution of copyrighted movies, software, games and music on the Internet. Operation FastLink has resulted, to date, more than 120 search warrants executed in 12 countries; the confiscation of hundreds of computers and illegal online distribution hubs; and the removal of more than \$50 million worth of illegally-copied copyrighted software, games, movies and music from illicit distribution channels. As of today, Operation FastLink has yielded felony convictions for 30 individuals.

"Federal law enforcement is dedicated to prosecuting online piracy in all forms," said U.S. Attorney Rosenberg. "These sentences are part of a concerted federal effort to ensure that pirates cannot hide behind the perceived anonymity of the Internet."

The defendants sentenced today were leading members of pre-release music groups. As detailed in the statements of facts filed with the three plea agreements, these individuals were active members of pre-release groups; that is, groups that acted as "first-providers" of copyrighted works to the Internet – the so-called "release" groups that are the original sources for a majority of the pirated works distributed and downloaded via the Internet.

As leading members of the pre-release music groups Apocalypse Crew and Chromance, these defendants sought to acquire digital copies of songs and albums before their commercial release in the

United States. Once a group prepared a stolen work for distribution, the material was distributed in minutes to secure computer servers throughout the world. From there, within a matter of hours, the pirated works are distributed globally, filtering down to peer-to-peer and other public file sharing networks accessible to anyone with Internet access.

Operation FastLink is the culmination of multiple FBI undercover investigations. The Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA) and several of its member companies provided substantial assistance to the FBI in its investigation of the pre-release music scene. RIAA members create, manufacture and/or distribute approximately 90 percent of all legitimate sound recordings produced and sold in the United States.

This case was prosecuted by Jay V. Prabhu, trial attorney for the Justice Department's Computer Crime and Intellectual Property Section and a Special Assistant U.S. Attorney in the Eastern District of Virginia.

###

06-313

---

- [\*\*More information on: Operation Fastlink\*\*](#)
- [\*\*More information on: Protecting Intellectual Property Rights\*\*](#)
- [\*\*More information on: Intellectual Property Crime Cases\*\*](#)

Go to . . . [CCIPS Home Page](#) || [Justice Department Home Page](#)

---

Last modified on: June 20, 2006 13:24  
USDOJ-CRM/ITM/DGEE